

Office of Congressman Charles W. Dent
Proudly Representing Pennsylvania's 15th District



For Immediate Release
July 21, 2005

Contact: Gregg W. Bortz
610-861-9734 or (cell) 202-222-5118

Congressman Dent votes to reauthorize the Patriot Act

Washington, D.C. — U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent (PA-15) made the following statement in regard to reauthorization of the USA Patriot Act:

“As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I have observed first-hand the lengths we have taken to keep American citizens safe from terrorist attacks. I have seen the brilliant work of first responders preparing to save lives in the event of another attack, and have been proud to help provide them additional support.

Important as readiness is, prevention of terrorist attack is the higher priority. Recent bombing attacks in London demonstrate that our enemy has not given up its quest for death and destruction in Western cities. Al Qaeda once made a specific threat to kill four million Americans, and I have no reason to believe they won't try.

For these reasons I support reauthorization of the USA Patriot Act, which was designed to provide law enforcement with the tools it needed to find these murderers before they strike. Prosecuting the perpetrators after the fact is simply not sufficient when we could have saved thousands of lives.

The Patriot Act removes major legal barriers that that once prevented law enforcement, intelligence, and national defense communities from talking and coordinating their work to protect the American people. It provides the necessary tools to terrorism investigators, such as nationwide search warrants and roving wiretaps so officials can monitor suspects as they move from one location to another. And it strengthens penalties for those who commit the crimes associated with terrorist acts.

Amendments offered today in a bipartisan manner further protect civil liberties, addressing legitimate concerns without compromising our ongoing counterterrorism efforts. The Patriot Act is supported by prosecutors and

police throughout the country who are on the front line of homeland security.

Remember, terrorism isn't like any another crime; it's an effort to undermine our society and our freedoms by killing as many people as possible and creating chaos. On Sept. 11, 2001, terrorists failed their overall objective, but that type of attack on our shores must not be allowed to happen again if we can prevent it.

Even our home district — a metropolitan area within commuting distance of New York and Philadelphia — is not immune to terrorist threat. It's with this awareness that I don't hesitate to cast my vote today to reauthorize the USA Patriot Act."

###